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DATE 4.3.07
SB 78

MONTANA LANDOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

February 20, 2007

Honorable 2007 Montana Legislators, House Of Representatives,

Following discussions with voters in general with whom I am acquainted; as President of Montana Landowners Association, Inc. (a registered Montana Corporation) I write to object to S.B. #78 and the potential costs and many other problems involved.

1.) Water Access:

Landowners and others who financially contributed to obtain and assure original public access to public water could see the wisdom of establishing safe areas where children and Recreationist's could enjoy life away from roads. SB. #78 will encourage activities at many bridges primarily built for vehicle traffic.

2.) Public Access:

The streams of Montana are open to the world, which means a few billion people, handicapped, aged, children and pets.

3.) Bridge Availability/Safety

How many bridges will be made available for public use? What provisions will be made for traffic control, signing, ECT..?

4.) Four Points of Access:

Each bridge has four (4) potential points of access. How many will be demanded for access to streams?

5.) Expansions of Bridge/Safety

To provide safety for Pedestrians, handicapped, bicycle and foot traffic at the Big Timber Boulder River crossing it was necessary to add "Pedestrian Lanes." How many bridges will require similar expansion?

6.) Provisions for Handicapped:

What facilities will be required to transport the Handicapped from the elevation of bridge to the elevation of stream and return, and at how many of the potential four (4) points of the bridge? Lifts, Elevators, Wheel Chair accessible; Handicapped are entitled? Would you discriminate? At what cost did Billings provide Wheel Chair street crossings at downtown streets?

7.) Car Parking:

Have provisions for parking been considered? Will it be required that the road be widened? Are foot paths between parking and bridge included? Will a parking area require more Land, taking of private property, handicapped transportation?

8.) Rest Room Facilities at parking area:

Will facilities be required? Who will care for septic if required, at how many bridges. (Checking of stream beds has revealed that the public are prone to relieve themselves and the need for public facilities.)

9.) Liability:

S.B. #78 encourages public gatherings at public bridges? Who will accept liability that is estimated to be enormous by some? Will Fish-Wildlife and Parks? Recreationist's by special licensing? Will private property be taxed for cost, liability and costs are important questions that Legislators and County Commissioners should give considerable and due consideration.

10. Illegal Activity:

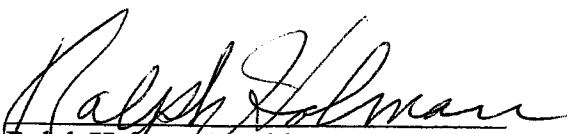
Considering potential public activity established at bridges opened to the public will increased activity at bridge sites encourage bridges to be used as a convenient and attractive pick up location for illegal drugs? Bridges are excellent landmarks; will the camouflage of legal activity attract illegal activity? Will bridges become a state wide "Drug Market Place?"

11.) Business Area

In addition to existing stream access locations, Montana is fortunate to have hundreds of Lakes that are accessible by a little effort on our part away from roads and traffic where public access can and should be improved.

We oppose S.B. #78 and recommend that Recreationists and Landowners seek a congenial means of solving problems.

Respectfully submitted,
Montana Landowners Association, Inc.


Ralph Holman, President